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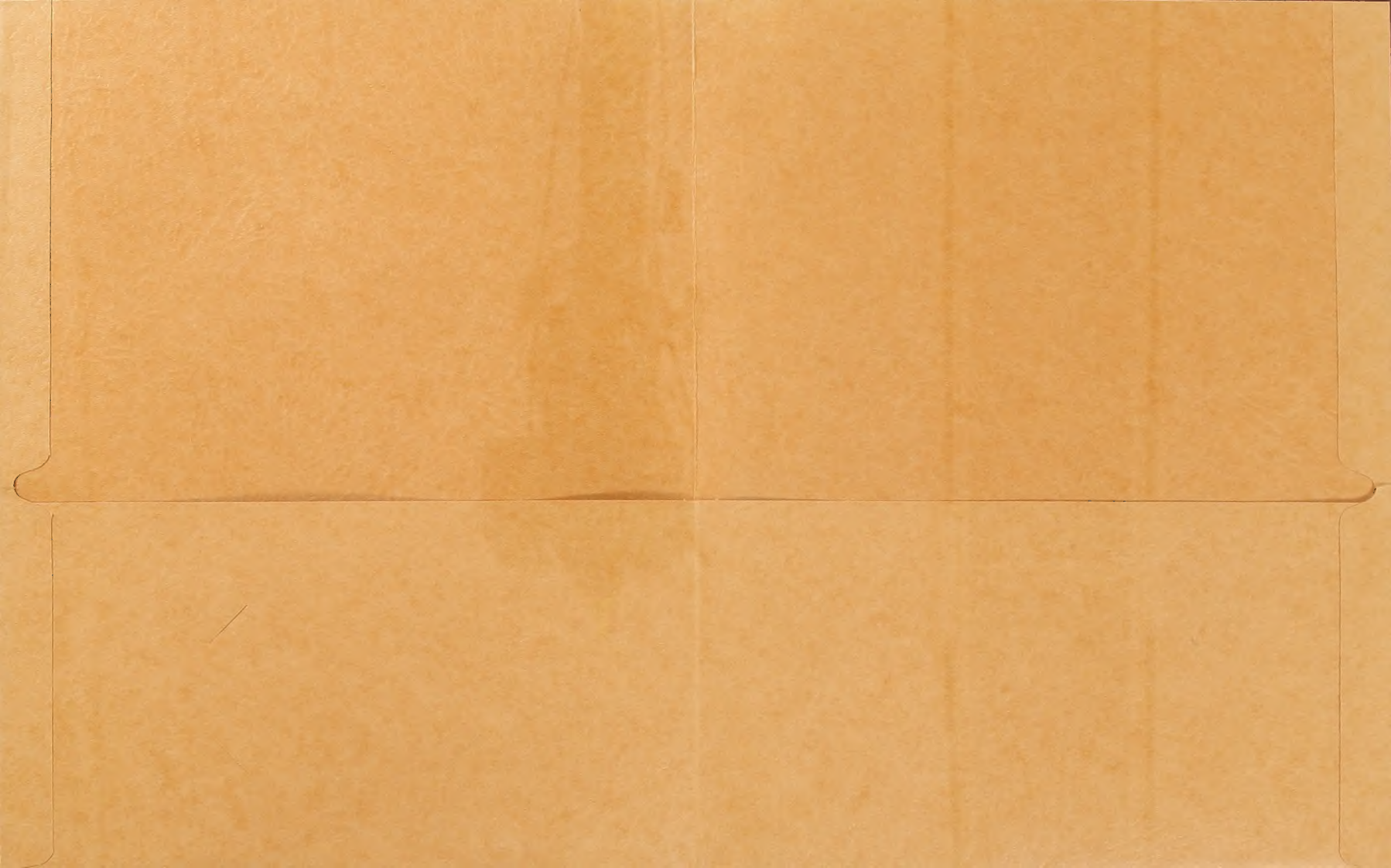
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Government
Publications

Background information
Missinabi Provincial
Park



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Proposed



Missinaibi Provincial Park



Ontario

Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Hon. Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister
Mary Mogford
Deputy Minister

NOVEMBER 1986

Background Information

THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

"But it was soon over and we were well paid for our work by entering Lake Missinaibi, one of the most beautiful sheets of water, all declared, that it had been their good fortune to witness. Sixty miles in width (sic) and forty in width, dotted with beautiful islands, it was a grand sight. The high banks and summits of the hills, covered with evergreens, with the white birch and the maple to relieve the monotony, made it beautiful."

An early account from the journals of J.E. Burchard (Canoeing to Salt Water [Hudson Bay Archives, 1880]).

"Below us lay the camp, the smoke lazily curling from the evening fire, the tents nestled amongst the fresh green poplars had an air of coziness, a fitting substitute for the comforts of home, or even the luxuries of a palace."

Immediately below us lay the steep-walled canyon, one hundred feet down to the rushing waters of the cataract. From far up the river came the waters of the rapids, plunging madly onward, to be divided by a huge rock, around which they rushed to meet again at the falls, a seething, boiling mass of foam and spray, and to plunge a second time to a still lower level. Repeating this again and again, they at last pass out of the canyon, deep and silent, into the broadening river beyond.

From where we stood, the roar was deafening, and as the darkness gathered, we saw, looming up in the center of the canyon, the pinnacle of rock from which the place derives its name."

A description of the Thunder House Falls and Conjuring House Rock area, by W. Tees Curran and H.A. Calkins (In Canada's Wonderful Northland [1912]).

The Canadian
Heritage
Rivers
System

Le Réseau
de rivières
du patrimoine
canadien



This background information document is intended to serve a variety of purposes. First and foremost, it represents the initial step in the preparation of a provincial park management plan for Missinaibi Provincial Park, long recognized as one of the premier waterways in Ontario. Your reactions to this, and the subsequent preliminary management plan, will ensure that the views of interested groups and individuals are considered during the policy development stage of the planning program. Through written submissions and comments gathered at public information centres, your views will be reflected in the final plan for the park.

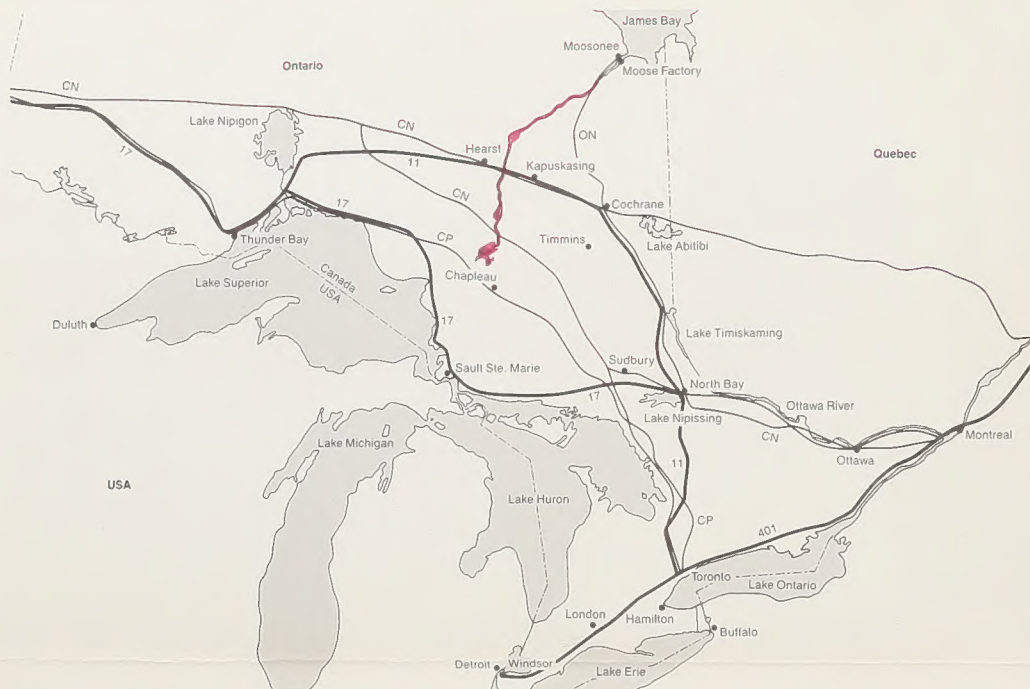
Second, the production of a background information document is the first in a series of steps required in the planning process. The culmination of that process is the production of an approved plan that will guide resource management in the park over the next twenty years. The presentation of an approved plan to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board will result in the designation of the Missinaibi as part of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. The CHRS is jointly sponsored by the Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments, in an effort to recognize waterways that have outstanding natural, heritage and recreational values.

Third, this background information document is intended to stand on its own as a compilation of important resource information regarding the Missinaibi. It is the distillation of a large number of reports done over the past fifteen years, and should serve as a reference for individuals wanting information regarding the Missinaibi.

It should be noted that at the time of printing, Missinaibi Provincial Park has yet to be regulated under the Provincial Parks Act. However, that action, which will incorporate the river into the Provincial Parks system, is anticipated in the near future. As such, it should be understood that references to "Missinaibi Provincial Park" were included so as not to date the contents of the document.

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About the Park

THE MISSINAIBI

The Canadian Shield rises sharply from Lake Superior and soon reaches the height of land, from which the long and gentle slope to James and Hudson bays begins. From Wawa, it is only 80 kilometres to the divide, and Missinaibi Lake, the main headwater lake of the Missinaibi River, lies just on the other side. From Missinaibi Lake, the Missinaibi flows 400 kilometres across the Shield and the Hudson Bay Lowland, to merge into the Moose River, 100 kilometres south of James Bay (see Map 1).

The Missinaibi, with the Michipicoten River to the south and the Moose River to the north, provides the shortest link between the Great Lakes and Arctic tidewater. It was therefore an important trade and communications route from prehistoric times until a century ago. In the modern era, the Missinaibi's remoteness has protected it from the large scale industrial and hydroelectric development which occurred on most of northeastern Ontario's rivers. Yet the Missinaibi is accessible enough that it has been enjoyed by thousands of recreationists and has come to be appreciated as one of Ontario's great canoe routes. Today, the Missinaibi is the longest river in northeastern Ontario which remains

basically undeveloped but is also road and rail accessible. Its outstanding natural and cultural heritage, and scenic and recreational qualities make it one of Ontario's key waterway parks and a worthy candidate for Canadian Heritage River designation.

Missinaibi Provincial Park includes the following:

- the former provincial park in the Missinaibi Lake area commonly known as Missinaibi Lake Provincial Park, with boundary adjustments to include all of Missinaibi Lake as well as Little Missinaibi Lake, and to exclude some backshore areas formerly in the park;
- the former Missinaibi River Provincial Park Reserve, including the entire Missinaibi River from the outlet of Missinaibi Lake to the Moose River, plus Brunswick Lake, Brunswick Lake Portage, and the Brunswick River, and 19 kilometres of the Moose River downstream to Moose River Crossing; this includes Crown shorelines 122 metres back from the water in some areas and 200 metres back from the water in others, plus large blocks in the Peterbell and Thunder House Falls areas.



Landscape

The Missinabi River begins in rugged Canadian Shield country and ends just above James Bay. In between, like all of Ontario's major Arctic watershed rivers, the Missinabi passes through long stretches of two major physical features: the Shield and the Hudson Bay Lowland.

The Missinabi and Little Missinabi lakes area is dominated by exposed Precambrian bedrock, one to three billion years old. Rock formations, varying from rugged cliffs to smooth, glacier sculptured surfaces, surround the lakes and provide much of the area's scenic attraction. These formations may also have attracted Indian rock artists, bringing about the concentration of rock paintings on the lakes. The area is an excellent example of a bedrock controlled environment in the Shield north of Lake Superior. Soils are generally thin.

North of Missinabi Lake, the terrain begins to level out, and the Shield bedrock is covered by thickening layers of soil. In the Peterbell area, the Missinabi passes through a large marsh. From Brunswick Lake to Thunder House Falls, the river crosses an almost level clay plain, the Great Clay Belt, which has been developed for agriculture along either side of Highway 11. Small rapids and falls are frequent all the way from Missinabi Lake to Thunder House Falls. The river then reaches the escarpment which marks the contact between the Shield and the Lowland. The three major rivers which drain into the south end of James Bay, the Missinabi, the Matagami, and the Abitibi, fall around 60 metres when they pass through this escarpment. The Missinabi cascades through Conjurung House Rapids, Thunder House Falls, Stone Rapids, and Long Rapids; this area is the scenic high point of a journey down the river, and is of considerable geological interest. The parallel rapids and falls on the Matagami and Abitibi have been harnessed for hydroelectric power.

The Hudson Bay Lowland is almost level and slopes gently to the sea. Through the Lowland, there are few rapids along the Missinabi and Moose; the river flows quickly and steadily down to James Bay. The bedrock, some 70 to 350 million years old, is thickly covered with sediments laid down by ice sheets and ocean invasions over the past million years. Sediments left since the last glaciers began to withdraw about 8,000 years ago generally deeply cover everything older. However, the Missinabi and Moose rivers in the lower portion of the park are bordered by cliffs. Along these cliffs, there are rare exposures of bedrock, clay, sand, and gypsum; and of glacial sediments from before the last ice age. Plant and marine fossils are found in some of these sediments. The only exposed interglacial sediments in Ontario are on the Missinabi and in Toronto, and those on the Missinabi are the best protected, the oldest, and the most complete.

The following earth science features along the Missinabi have been identified as particularly significant (see Map 2).

- * A glacially ground semicircular pothole (the other half may have been away or have been formed by the glacier itself), with rock paintings on the pothole wall, on Little Missinabi Lake.
- * Natural levees along the river, relics of a major postglacial lake, in the marsh area north of Peterbell.

- * A valuable single exposure of a wide variety of Precambrian rocks seldom exposed in the Clay Belt, at Beaver Rapids (on private land).
- * A valuable series of exposures of metamorphosed Precambrian rocks, between Glassy Falls and Crow Rapids (on private land).
- * An excellent, massive exposure of early Precambrian rock (gneiss and migmatite), near Thunder House Falls.
- * A rare exposure, perhaps unique to Ontario, of the actual contact between the Precambrian bedrock of the Shield and the Cretaceous bedrock of the Lowland, below Long Rapids.
- * Outstanding exposures of Cretaceous silica sand, kaolinite, and fireclay deposits, in McBrien Township (on Park land within a mining lease).
- * An exposure of unconsolidated sediments covering the last 350,000 years of glacial and interglacial history, and considered to be of outstanding scientific importance, in Amery Township.
- * An exposure of Friday Creek sediments, a rarely exposed interglacial deposit not represented at the McBrien Township site, at the mouth of the Sowska River.
- * An excellent exposure of the interglacial Missinabi Formation deposits, containing abundant large plant fossils representative of the boreal forest which then existed here, in Habel Township.
- * Representative exposures of Cretaceous silica sand, kaolinite, and fireclay deposits, in Habel Township.
- * A unique marine fossil site which is the only evidence of the earliest known interglacial marine invasion of the Hudson Bay Lowland, in Habel Township.
- * An outstanding exposure of the Missinabi Formation and its plant and animal fossil record, along with a distinctive Devonian gypsum exposure, in a location readily accessible to the scientific community, near Moose River Crossing.

Vegetation

The forests of the Missinabi and Little Missinabi lakes area are typical of those along the height of land northeast of Lake Superior. Balsam fir, black and white spruce, jack pine, white birch, and trembling aspen, the characteristic species of the boreal forest, are dominant. Trees characteristic of the mixed forest to the south, such as red and white pine, reach their northern limits in this area and are found occasionally on drier, warmer sites. Most plants are typical for the Clay Belt, but the same landscape factors which made the Missinabi an important waterway for humans also seem to have encouraged the spread into the lakes area of species more typical of Lake Superior to the south and James Bay to the north. Many species new to, or uncommon in, this region of the province have been identified in the Missinabi and Little Missinabi lakes area.

Below Missinabi Lake, the park's vegetation is generally limited to that found along riverbanks in the Clay Belt and the Hudson Bay Lowland. The same boreal forest species that are dominant in the lakes area are dominant downstream also, along with balsam poplar and cedar. This forest continues along the river banks right down to the Moose River, concealing the vast expanses of stunted black spruce and tamarack muskeg characteristic of the Lowland. However, there is a wide variety of forest and plant communities along the Missinabi, due to the river's great length, its

continually changing landscape, and its function as a natural migration route between Lake Superior and James Bay. The upper stretches of the river flow through several interesting wetland areas. The Thunder House Falls area is also botanically interesting, because it is a contact zone between the Clay Belt and Lowland forests, and because the river gorge through the escarpment provides a habitat unusual in this region of Ontario. Many plant species new to or uncommon in the region have been identified along the river.

The following life science features along the Missinabi have been identified as particularly significant (see Map 2).

- * Unusual plant species and an excellent red pine stand, near Fairy Point on Missinabi Lake.
- * A stand of red and white pine, some perhaps up to 500 years old, protected from fire and cutting by their location, on Reva Island on Missinabi Lake.
- * The rich wetland flora of a small boggy lake, and a jack pine burn which provides good elk habitat (see Wildlife section below), near the old Borasso lumber camp north of Missinabi Lake.
- * A type of rush which is rare in Ontario, and sites of other unusual plants, near the Barclay Bay campground on Missinabi Lake.
- * Uncommon aquatic plants, on Snake Arm Bay of Missinabi Lake.
- * Lowland meadows, grassy shores, and shallow sandbars which support distinctive terrestrial and aquatic vegetation and are home to several regionally significant plant species, at the Narrows at the north end of Missinabi Lake.
- * Cleared upland meadows which are home to a number of introduced plant species and provide excellent elk habitat (see Wildlife section below), and nearby lowland meadows and grassed sand beaches which support distinctive vegetation communities, around New Brunswick House on Missinabi Lake.
- * An interesting and varied river environment, with many uncommon plant species, in the Hay River area.
- * The Peterbell marsh, the most extensive wetland along the waterway, and the nearby Peterbell string bog, a type of wetland unusual this far south,

both with many uncommon plant species.

- * A small stand of black ash and large white elm, near the northern limits of their range, north of Alice Island, and a similar stand, perhaps the farthest north occurrence of elm in the Lowland, in Gentles Township.

Vegetation which shows the rapid transition between the boreal forest and the Lowland, including many uncommon species in the river gorges, in the Thunder House Falls area.

Fish

Missinabi Lake is cold and deep (up to 90 metres) and is one of northeastern Ontario's better lake trout lakes. Little Missinabi Lake, on the other hand, is a shallower warm-water lake, with walleye (yellow pickerel) and northern pike being the main species.

Along the Missinabi River and in Brunswick Lake, the warm-water species typical of the rivers of the James Bay watershed are dominant: walleye, pike, perch, and smallmouth bass. Lake sturgeon, whitefish, and various coarse species are also found. Several of the river's tributaries are good brook trout streams, and there is also good trout fishing in the river itself around the mouths of the tributaries and just below Missinabi Lake.

Wildlife

The wildlife of Missinabi Park is generally typical of the boreal forest. The Missinabi and Little Missinabi lakes area, and the river south of Peterbell fall within the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve. Hunting and trapping have been prohibited here since 1925. As a result, moose are abundant, and population densities are among the highest in Ontario. Also protected in the Chapleau Game Preserve is a very small herd of elk, one of two Ontario herds surviving from a 1930s attempt to reintroduce this species, which was eradicated from the province in the 19th century. The elk were released at Peterbell before they reached their intended destination, and their range now appears to focus on the Missinabi Lake area.

Bald eagles have nested on Missinabi Lake, while golden eagles have nested along the Missinabi River; both species are

considered endangered in Ontario. North of Thunder House Falls, the river enters caribou range, and the northernmost portion of the Missinabi, as well as the Moose River within the park, fall within the James Bay coastal area which geese use for spring staging on their northward migration.

Recreational Environment

Missinabi Park provides opportunities for recreational enjoyment of an entire river system. The main headwater lakes, Missinabi and Little Missinabi, have over 375 kilometres of predominantly rocky shoreline. Below Missinabi Lake, the Missinabi River continues for over 400 kilometres to the Moose River, and an additional 20 kilometres of the Moose is included in the park. There are over 50 sets of rapids along the route. Also in the park is a 40 kilometre alternate route via Brunswick Lake and River.

The usable open water recreational season is limited to the period from mid-May to mid-October. Cool weather is a significant limitation in May, September, and October. Only the lake areas are usable for recreation in the winter, due to unsafe or absent ice cover on portions of the river.

The rivers draining into James and Hudson bays vary tremendously in their flows during the open water season. Flows are very high during and after breakup, and then fall off dramatically. From July on, low water can make canoe navigation more difficult and increase the amount of portaging or lining required. On the other hand, low water levels expose additional potential campsites and stopping places on sand and gravel bars. The entire Missinabi can be navigated safely in three weeks or less by competent and experienced canoeists using standard equipment.



Typical Swallowtail and Wood Lilies



Pictographs

About 9,500 years ago, the glaciers began to withdraw northwards from the Missinabi area. Glacial lakes and readvancing ice covered the Shield portion of the park until about 8,000 years ago. When the ice withdrew from the Hudson Bay Lowland, the sea invaded, but it has been slowly retreating ever since as the land has been rebounding from the enormous weight of the glaciers. The Lowland portion of the park has been exposed for only about 5,000 years.

Although the first prehistoric peoples are known to have migrated into northeastern Ontario soon after the withdrawal of the glaciers, there is only one site in Missinabi Park which has fairly conclusively been linked with the Archaic hunters and gatherers of over 2,000 years ago. Intensive use of the Missinabi appears to have begun after AD 600. Various groups occupied the Shield and Lowland portions of the James Bay watershed over the next 1,000 years, and traded with each other and with other groups as far away as the lower Great Lakes. These nomadic peoples subsisted on fish, game, and wild plants. Their activity likely focused on lakes and rivermouths, and this is reflected by the distribution of the approximately 25 prehistoric archaeological sites which have been found within the park.

"Missinabi" appears to be an English corruption of an Ojibwa phrase meaning "pictured waters" or "pictures in the water". In other words, the park's name may refer directly to the pictographs which reflect into the headwater lakes. There are three rock painting sites on Missinabi Lake. The Fairy Point area is one of the best and most extensive in Ontario, with over 100 pictographs. On Little Missinabi Lake there are four sites. One is on the wall of the semicircular poliothe previously described. Another landform which may well have had symbolic or religious significance to native peoples is Conjuging House Rock, a massive pillar at Thunder House Falls.

When the first explorers and fur traders arrived in northeastern Ontario in the 17th century, the Shield was occupied by the Ojibwa and the Lowland by the Cree. The history of the Missinabi area really began with the incorporation of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. For the next 150 years, two fur trading empires struggled for supremacy: the Montreal fur trade using the St. Lawrence and the

Great Lakes to reach the west, and the Hudson Bay fur trade using the rivers of the Arctic watershed. The Missinabi was one of the major pathways to the fur resources of the Arctic watershed in Ontario, and was thus of considerable interest to the Hudson's Bay Company. The Moose-Missinabi-Michipicoten route was also the shortest and easiest route between James Bay and the Great Lakes, and was therefore important not only to the Company, but also to its rivals in the fur trade, and to the Indians who also traded and thus profited from fur trade activities. As a result, Missinabi Park today incorporates fur trade post remains equalled in extent in few if any other parks in Canada.

Moose Fort was established near present day Moose Factory in 1673. For the next century, the Indians of the park area came to tidewater to trade, and the Missinabi remained unoccupied by the fur traders. In the late 18th century, the growing competition between the Montreal and Hudson Bay traders forced the Hudson's Bay Company inland. One of the first inland posts ever established by the Company was Wapicogamy House (later Brunswick House), built in 1776 where the Piwabiskau (Piwabiska) River flows into the Missinabi. In 1777, the Company established Missinabi House on Missinabi Lake, but it lasted only three years. Another attempt to reach farther inland was made in 1788, when New Brunswick House was established on Brunswick Lake. This post was successful enough that in 1791 the Company abandoned the original Brunswick House at the Piwabiskau. The Montreal-based North West Company was not far behind, and built competing posts on Brunswick Lake before the 1821 unification with the Hudson's Bay Company. The Hudson's Bay Company made these superfluous. During the period of greatest competition between the two companies, the Hudson's Bay Company reopened Missinabi House, while the North West Company built rival posts on Missinabi Lake, at the Piwabiskau, and possibly at the outlet of the Coal River.

When the competing fur trade companies unified into the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, there were four fur trade posts operating in what is now Missinabi Park, two on Missinabi Lake and two on Brunswick Lake. Three of these were then abandoned, and the trade of the area was concentrated at New

Brunswick House on Brunswick Lake. New Brunswick had become the key post in the area during the competition period, and maintained this role for a time. The river as a whole continued to serve as a vital link between the Company's James Bay and Lake Superior trades; posts such as Michipicoten (near Wawa) were supplied from Moose Factory via the Missinabi. However, by the 1860s, the coming of steamships, canals, and railways created fast and efficient transportation systems linking settled Canada to Lake Superior, which the Company was quick to take advantage of. New Brunswick House's links with Sault Ste. Marie and Michipicoten strengthened, while those with Moose Factory weakened.

In 1873 the Hudson's Bay Company reopened its Missinabi Lake post to meet the competition of a free trader who had set up nearby. Six years later, the Company decided that it could not justify the expense of two posts and closed the Brunswick Lake post, transferring the New Brunswick House name to Missinabi Lake. In 1885, the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed through northern Ontario, crossing the Missinabi-Michipicoten water route at Missinabi. Now it was only a short haul from the railway to Missinabi Lake, and the route to James Bay fell into disuse. The coming of the railways also spelled the end of the system of inland posts. New Brunswick House was closed in 1917. Another post, English River Post, which was opened on the Missinabi below the Piwabiskau in the 1890s, was closed around 1920. From then on, what remained of the fur trade was conducted at Moose Factory - still in operation today - and from stores in railway towns like Mattice and Peterbell. About 20 archaeological sites associated with the fur trade have been identified in the park, including the remains of the most important posts: Wapicogamy House, New Brunswick House on Brunswick Lake, and New Brunswick House on Missinabi Lake.

The coming of the fur trade caused a gradual change in the nomadic habits of the Cree and Ojibwa. The Indians began to spend more and more of their time near the posts. There are several archaeological sites along the river associated with Indian encampments during this period, and Indian activity is also represented at fur trade sites.

In 1905, the Indians of the southern James Bay watershed surrendered their lands to the Crown. A reserve was established on Missinabi Lake for the Ojibwa associated with New Brunswick House. Although many of the reserve residents resettled elsewhere after New Brunswick House closed in 1917, they continued to use the reserve as a base for hunting, fishing, and trapping. In 1925, however, the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve was established. The next year, the New Brunswick House Band surrendered the reserve which the federal government then transferred to Ontario. Today this Band, the descendants of the former inhabitants of Missinabi Lake, occupies a small reserve just outside Chapleau. The Band submitted a claim to the federal and Ontario governments in 1976 requesting return of the original reserve, most of which is now in the park, plus monetary compensation. The federal government is continuing to review this claim with the Band.

The Missinabi became part of Ontario's modern resource frontier in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Canadian Pacific Railway was followed by the Canadian Northern and National Transcontinental Railways, crossing the river at Peterbell and Mattice respectively. Both transcontinentals were completed in 1915 and both were later incorporated into Canadian National Railways.

The first logging in the park area began in the 1920s, using Peterbell as a base. Peterbell, with a population of up to 200, was an active logging and sawmilling community until 1940. Along the northern Canadian National line, however, the first modern industry was agriculture. The Clay Belt was heavily promoted as an agricultural frontier, but only a band of a few kilometres on either side of the railway was ever cleared. Mattice came into existence as a railway and agricultural settlement town. Logging in the Mattice area began in the 1930s, and a sawmill was based in the town. At first, the Missinabi River was used for driving logs to the mills, but road hauling took over in the postwar period. The 1942 completion of Highway 11 parallel to the northern railway accelerated the growth of the modern forest industry centred on Kapuskasing and Hearst. Abandoned log booms, dams,

bridges, landings, and camps along the river remain as evidence of the earlier days of the forest industry.

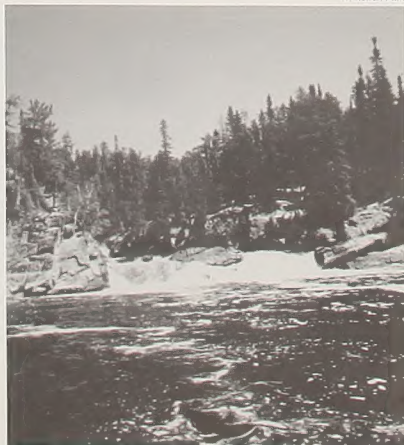
In 1932, what is now the Ontario Northland Railway was completed to Moosonee. The railway crossed the Moose River near a traditional summering place of the Cree, and a small, permanent Indian community grew up there, encouraged by the construction of a sawmill which operated for a time.

The first step towards preservation of the resources of the Missinabi came with the establishment of the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve in 1925. Hunting and trapping were prohibited in a 722,000 hectare area including the present park south of Peterbell. In the postwar period, the rapid growth of roads and recreation in northern Ontario spurred rapid development of the provincial parks system. In 1970, Missinabi Lake Provincial Park was established around central and eastern Missinabi Lake (now accessible by road), and part of the Missinabi River was designated as a provincial park reserve. These were the first steps towards the protection of almost the entire Missinabi system in a provincial park.

The following archaeological and historical features along the Missinabi have been identified as particularly significant (see Map 2).

- * The Fairy Point pictographs, on Missinabi Lake.
- * The most significant known archaeological site in the Missinabi Lake area, with several layers of occupation reaching from historic times back to at least AD 800 and possibly as long as 2,000 years ago, on Snake Arm Bay, Missinabi Lake.
- * The site of New Brunswick House (1873-1917), earlier operated as Missinabi House on and off from 1777 to 1821, on Missinabi Lake.
- * The site of New Brunswick House (1788-1879), the most important archaeological and historical feature along the waterway, with its use over almost a century thoroughly documented in the archival records of the Hudson's Bay Company, on Brunswick Lake.
- * The site of Wapicogamy (later Brunswick) House (1776-1791), at the mouth of the Piwabiskau River.

Whitetail Falls



People

There are two communities along the Missinaibi-Moose waterway between the upper and lower ends of Missinaibi Park. Mattice is located where Highway 11 and the northern Canadian National line cross the Missinaibi. About 1,200 people live in the incorporated Township of Mattice-Val Côte, which the river divides in half: 600 people in Mattice itself, 200 in Val Côte 10 kilometres west of the river, and 200 more in the rural areas of the Township. The forest industry is the principal employer. Agricultural activity is now very limited. The population of Mattice-Val Côte is slowly declining, part of a general movement to Hearst from the surrounding townships.

Moose River (generally known as Moose River Crossing), a mainly Cree community of about 70, is located where the Ontario Northland Railway crosses the Moose. While most residents of Moose River Crossing belong to the Moose Factory Band, the community has no reserve status and is situated on Crown and railway land. Wage employment opportunities are limited to the railway. Guiding, trapping, and subsistence hunting and fishing are important to Moose River Crossing's economy.

The rest of the lands near the park are uninhabited, except for thin bands of settlement along Highway 11 and to a lesser extent along the Ontario Northland and southern Canadian National rail lines. Peterbell is now completely abandoned. The only major centres within 100 kilometres of the park are Chapleau (population 3,200), Kapuskasing (12,000), Hearst (5,500), and Moosonee-Moose Factory (2,900).

Land Use

Missinaibi Provincial Park includes 99,000 hectares of public land and water administered by the Province of Ontario. There are, however, some privately owned or used lands which are within the park's exterior boundary or which border on those portions of the Missinaibi and Moose Rivers included in the park. Land use permits and easements within the exterior boundary are legally part of the park, while licences of occupation, leases, and patents are legally excluded. With the following exceptions (some

shown on Map 2), the entire waterway and its shoreline from Missinaibi Lake to just below Moose River Crossing are publicly owned.

- Shoreline of Missinaibi Lake: three patented private recreational properties.
- Shoreline of Little Missinaibi Lake: two commercial fly-in outpost camps operating on annual land use permits.
- Peterbell: Canadian National Railway right of way, patented.
- Shoreline of Brunswick Lake: three patented properties, two of which operate as commercial fly-in lodges and one of which operates as a private company fly-in lodge; one private recreational property operating on an annual land use permit.
- Shoreline of Foster Lake: two private recreational properties operating on annual land use permits.
- Brunswick and Missinaibi rivers in Abbot Township: one Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company Ltd. year round road crossing of each river, operating on annual land use permits.
- Shoreline of Missinaibi and Mattawicewhan in Rykert, Magladery, Orkney, and Staunton Townships: patented to Spruce Falls, and form part of the company's timber operations.
- Bed of Missinaibi and Mattawicewhan in Orkney Township: patented to Spruce Falls.
- Mattice: Canadian National right of way, patented; TransCanada Pipelines right of way, long term land use permit; Highway 11 right of way, Ministry of Transportation and Communications.
- Bed of Missinaibi in Mattice: licence of occupation for water system intake, Township of Mattice-Val Côte.
- Shoreline of Missinaibi in Mattice area: most of the shorelines for about 5 kilometres on either side of Highway 11 are privately owned townsite or farm lands.
- Bed and shoreline of Missinaibi in McBrien Township: mining rights under the river and along the shoreline are included in a currently inactive Algonquin Mines lease which extends about 6 kilometres along the river and expires in 1993.
- Bed and shoreline of Missinaibi, Habel Township: mining rights under the river and surface and mining rights along the shoreline are held in a group of undeveloped



patented mining claims which extends about 2 kilometres along the river.

- Shoreline of Missinaibi, Gentles Township: Canada Department of the Environment water gauging station, no tenure.
- Moose River Crossing: Ontario Northland right of way, licence of occupation; Ontario Hydro right of way, long term land use permit.
- Bed of Moose, Moose River Crossing: two patented dock sites, Canada departments of the Environment and Public Works.
- Shoreline of Moose, Moose River Crossing: Canada Department of the Environment water gauging station, patent; Canfield District School Area Board public school, patent; Northern Mission Fellowship youth camp, annual land use permit, residences and community buildings, no tenure.
- Shoreline of Moose, Canfield Township: patented mining claims formerly extended for about 1.5 kilometres along the west shore between the railway bridge and the northern end of the park; these have been surrendered to the Crown, but are not included in the park.

There are four areas in the park designated as "wilderness areas" under the Wilderness Areas Act (Ontario): Old Brunswick House, Whetfish Falls, and Fairy Point on Missinaibi Lake, and New Brunswick House on Brunswick Lake. These designations are no longer of any significance, as provincial parks status provides much more effective legal protection than does designation under the Wilderness Areas Act.

There are no timber rights currently in force within the park. Winter crossings of the Missinaibi below the outlet of Missinaibi Lake to temporarily link harvesting operations on either side are authorized verbally or by letter of permission. No authorization is required in Orkney Township, as both shore and bed are owned by Spruce Falls Power and Paper.

Overall, the most developed area of the park is a stretch of about 10 kilometres around Mattice. There is also a moderate level of development around Moose River Crossing.

All permanent road, rail and utility line crossings are confined to these areas, with the exception of the southern Canadian National rail line at Peterbell and the Spruce Falls road crossings north of Brunswick Lake. There is modest commercial recreational activity on Little Missinaibi and Brunswick lakes.

Timber harvesting is active throughout much of the area behind the park shorelines from Missinaibi Lake to just south of Thunder House Falls, and there are a number of winter road crossings of the river in this area. The least developed, most unspoiled areas of the park are the Missinaibi and Little Missinaibi lakes area, the Missinaibi and Moose Rivers from Thunder House Falls to Moose River Crossing, and to some extent, the Missinaibi River from Peterbell to the portage to Brunswick Lake.

Ontario Hydro holds water power reservations at Thunder House Falls and Long Rapids on the Missinaibi, and at Portage Island where the Missinaibi flows into the Moose (see Map 2). These reservations include all lands which would be flooded if these sites were developed for hydroelectric power, from Long Rapids upstream to the Alice and Skunk Islands area, and from Portage Island to the Missinaibi for 9 kilometres. Hydro also holds a reservation at Renison on the Moose River north of the northern end of the park. This includes park lands which would be flooded if power were developed, up to Grey Goose Island 9 kilometres above Moose River Crossing.

Because the park boundaries follow tributary streams in some cases, there are two areas of Crown land which are entirely surrounded by park land but are not included in the park. One is a small section of Coderre Township, just north of Peterbell Marsh. The other is the much larger tract between the Missinaibi and Brunswick Lake and River.

Moose River Crossing

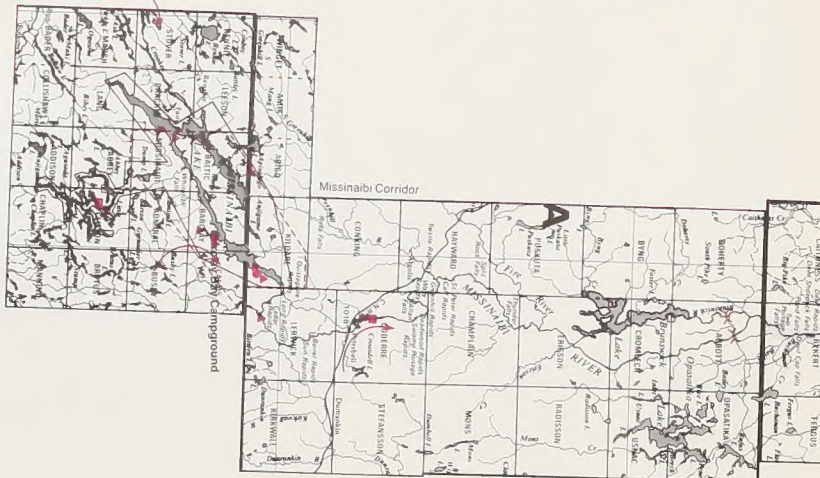


MISSISSAUGA RIVER

0 10 20 30 40 kilometres



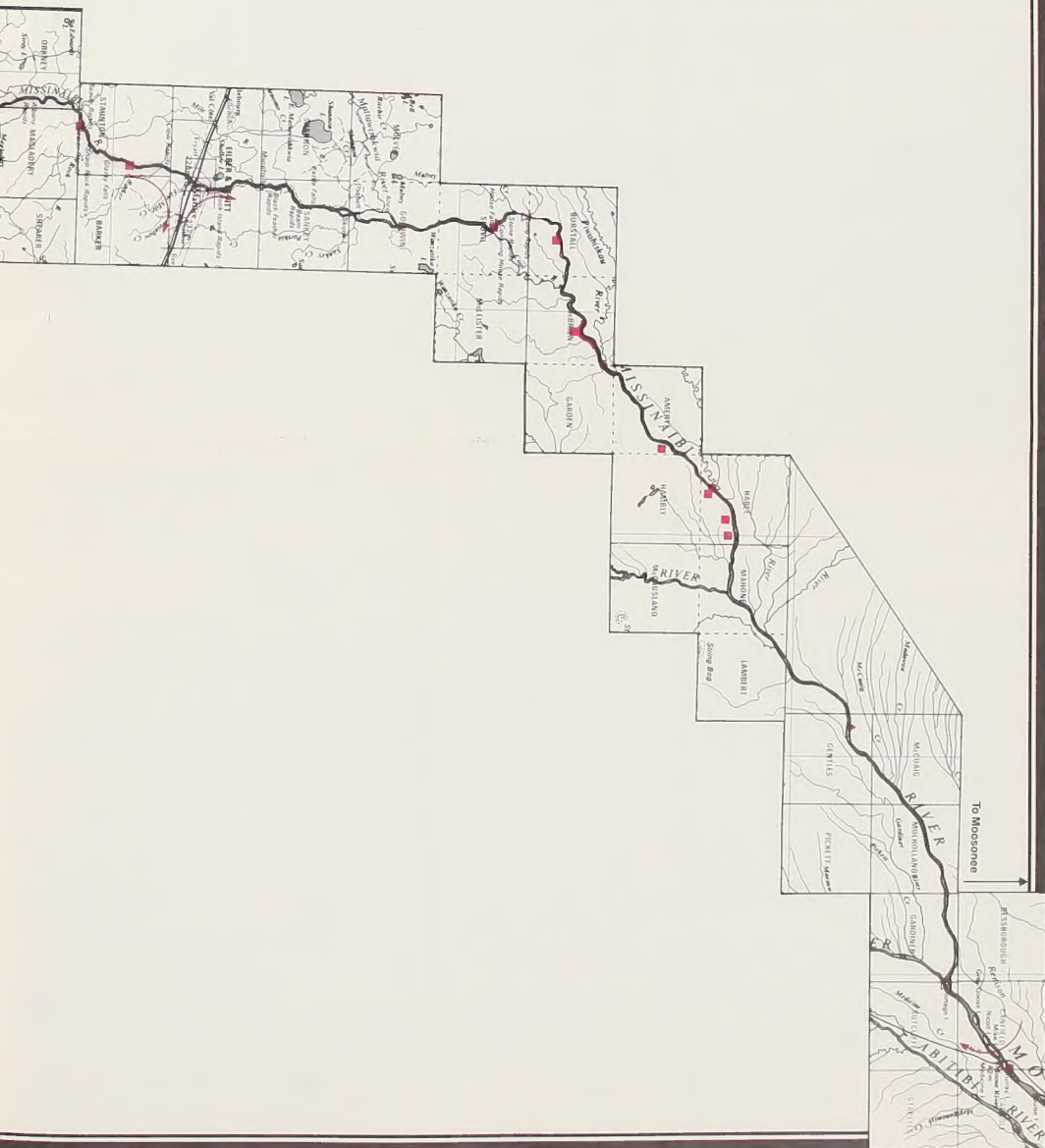
North



Mississauga Provincial Park

-  Watery sections included in mining lease
-  Patented shorelines
-  Ontario Hydro water power reservations
-  Year round forest road crossings
-  Access to Wateryway
-  Exit from Wateryway
-  Commercial Tourist Operators
-  Significant Earth Science Feature
-  Significant Life Science Feature
-  Significant Archaeological/Historical Feature
-  Former Mississauga Lake Provincial Park

PROVINCIAL PARK



Water

The Missinabi is an entirely naturally regulated river system; there are no operating dams in Missinabi Park. A dam was built at the outlet of Missinabi Lake as an aid to logging, but it has long since been abandoned and has ceased to control water levels.

The Mattice townsite is served by a community water and sewer system which withdraws raw water from and discharges fully treated sewage to the Missinabi. All other domestic

from the southern boundary of Rykert to the northern boundary of Staunton townships is privately owned by Spruce Falls. In 1974, Spruce Falls agreed not to cut (winter crossings excepted) within 122 metres of the Missinabi in its freehold townships.

From just south of Thunder House Falls northward, no roads have been built and no harvesting has taken place. The Ministry is proposing to enter into a forest management agreement with Hearst Forest Management Inc. which will include

McBrien and Habel townships, where surface rights are held by the Crown but mining rights are leased or patented, the holders of the mining rights are free to use those rights. In all of Scoville, Burstall, and McBrien townships, exploratory licences of occupation may be issued. Any exploratory licences issued would be for five year periods. Restrictive conditions would be imposed to minimize impacts on the park. Should a holder of an exploratory licence find an economically exploitable mineral or petroleum deposit, he would be entitled to a lease of the surface and mining rights necessary for exploitation. There are no exploratory licences in force at present in the park.

There have been several mines or significant mineral showings in or near the park. Just west of Missinabi Lake is an area of high mineral potential. At Renabie, a gold mine has been active on and off since the 1930s, and is currently operating. There are several other prospects or occurrences in the same area showing gold, molybdenum, copper, and iron. One group of claims in this area borders on the park. The other area of economic interest is the Cretaceous Basin, through which the Missinabi and Moose flow from Thunder House Falls to Moose River Crossing. Silica sand and kaolin have been found on the Algocenes Mine lease, and silica, kaolin, clay, gypsum, and lignite deposits of interest have been identified elsewhere on or near the rivers downstream from the Algocenes property. The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines has completed an extensive survey of the mineral potential of the Cretaceous Basin, but has not yet published the results.

There has been some gas and oil exploration in or near the Hudson Bay Lowland section of the park, but without success.

Sand and gravel resources are not significant, and have been used only for construction of forest and recreational access roads within the park.

Sport Fishing

Angling in Missinabi Park is subject to the regulations which apply in the surrounding area. There are no special regulations which apply to any part of the park. Angling regulations tend to become less restrictive proceeding from south to north. North of the northern Canadian National line, there are no closed seasons for any major sport species except sturgeon.

Angling is basically an open water activity in the park. The peak season extends from the third Saturday in May, when the walleye season opens south of the northern Canadian National line, until September. The prime species of interest to anglers are walleye and pike, except on Missinabi Lake which is renowned for its lake trout. The areas of greatest fishing activity appear to be Missinabi Lake, and the Missinabi River between Mattice and Alice Island. On Brunswick Lake, it appears that increases in angling pressure are accompanying improvements in road access.

Creel censuses have been conducted on Missinabi Lake. The fishery appears to be healthy and is being harvested within its sustainable yield. On Brunswick Lake, creel censuses have shown similar results. However, the last summer census was taken in 1978,

and the lake has become much more accessible since then. A winter creel census was conducted in 1986. No other creel censuses or biological surveys of park fisheries have been undertaken, but it appears that in general angling harvests are well below biological productivity.

Commercial and Native Subsistence Fishing

There is no commercial fishing (for sale as food) in Missinabi Park. Bait fishing (for sale to anglers) is permitted in park waters in Abbott, Magladery, and Staunton townships and the west half of Mattice-Val Côté. It appears that bait fish harvests are well below biological productivity.

Residents of Moose River Crossing harvest fish from the Moose River for home consumption.

Hunting

Hunting is not permitted in the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve, which includes all of Missinabi Park south of Peterbell. North of Peterbell, hunting is permitted in the park subject to the regulations applicable to the surrounding area. The big game species in the area are moose and bear. Moose hunting does not begin until late September or early October, and is open for periods ranging from six to twelve weeks. Moose hunter numbers are strictly controlled to ensure that harvests do not exceed biological productivity. Bear hunting is open for nine weeks in the spring and six weeks in the fall. Waterfowl, grouse, and snowshoe hare are also hunted in the fall. Hunting pressure on all these other species appears to be light relative to productivity.

Moose, small game, and waterfowl harvested for home consumption form a major part of the diet of the native people of the Hudson Bay Lowland. In the park, subsistence hunting occurs along the Moose and along the Missinabi just above the Moose.

Trapping

Trapping is not permitted in the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve portion of the park, south of Peterbell. North of Peterbell, all of the park area falls within registered and resident trappers. Beaver, marten and lynx account for most of the value of the furs harvested. Harvesting of these species is regulated by quota to ensure that trapping pressure is in balance with productivity.

Wildlife Research and Viewing

All of Missinabi Park south of Peterbell is included in the Chapleau Crown Game Preserve, a 722,000 hectare tract bounded by the southern Canadian National line on the north, the Algoma Central Railway on the west, the Canadian Pacific line on the south, and the Chapleau River on the east. The purpose of the Game Preserve is to provide a large area free from hunting and trapping in which wildlife research and appreciation opportunities can be provided.

Wildlife research is conducted within as well as outside the Missinabi Park portion of the Game Preserve. As well, cooperative efforts between the Ontario Government and the Town of Chapleau have led to intermittent bus tours and the construction of viewing stations along the road to Missinabi Lake. One of the last of the Game Preserve's excellent moose viewing opportunities.



Peterbell Marsh

water supplies and sewage disposal services are individually provided. Water quality along the Missinabi system is generally good to excellent, and there do not appear to be any problem areas. In recent years, there have been concerns about possible impacts on Missinabi Lake from breaches of the tailings ponds at the Renabie mine just west of the park. The Ontario Government has required the owner to perform major remedial work, and it now appears that Missinabi Lake was not affected and that potential future hazards have been eliminated.

Ontario Hydro's interest in future hydroelectric power development on the Missinabi and Moose is discussed in the Planning and Development Prospects section below.

Forest Resources

Although much of Missinabi Park's forest has been logged or burned over the past 60 years, there has been little of either in what is now the park since 1970. Commercial timber harvesting is not permitted in the park.

There is of course considerable logging outside park boundaries. The areas around Missinabi and Little Missinabi lakes and from just south of Mattice to south of Thunder House Falls are included in Crown surrounding area. The majority of the management units, in which the Ministry of Natural Resources concludes harvest agreements with various operators. The area from the outlet of Missinabi Lake to the southern boundary of Rykert Township, north of Brunswick Lake, is allocated to Spruce Falls Power and Paper under a forest management agreement. The area

the lands west of the park from just south of Mattice to the Piwabiskau River, and the lands east of the park in Scoville Township. As a result, it can be expected that access roads and timber harvesting will extend north behind the park shorelines, around the Thunder House Falls area and down to the Piwabiskau. It is unlikely that any commercial logging will occur north of the Piwabiskau in the foreseeable future, as access costs increase and timber quality declines towards James Bay.

Timber operators require river crossings to link their operations on either side of the Missinabi within the park. With the exception of Spruce Falls' all weather road bridges north of Brunswick Lake (see Map 2), these have been limited to winter crossings. Operators require approval for these crossings and the roads to access them, and are responsible for rehabilitating the sites after use.

There are a number of forest access roads within or just outside park boundaries which were originally developed for timber harvesting purposes and are now open for recreational access purposes. The most significant of these are around Brunswick Lake, and along the Skunk and Alice islands area.

Fire suppression is conducted in the park consistent with practices in the surrounding area. The majority of the park (south of latitude 50° 30') lies within Ontario's intensive fire protection zone.

Mineral Resources

Claim staking, exploration, and mining are not permitted in the park, with two exceptions. In portions of

Public Recreation Facilities

The main public recreational development in the park is in the Missinabi Lake area. Missinabi Lake Park was established in 1970 to include central and eastern Missinabi Lake and the surrounding lands (see Map 2). A road was built into Barclay Bay, and the following recreational facilities have been developed

- a campground at Barclay Bay, with a total of 36 individual sites in two camping areas, plus a third area for group camping, utility services are limited to a drinking water pump and pit toilets, facilities include a sand beach, a boat launching ramp and docks, and a fish cleaning hut,
- a trailer dumping station on the Barclay Bay access road,
- 24 designated boat-in back country campsites around the shoreline of Missinabi Lake,
- a 3 kilometre trail from the north end of Balic Bay to an abandoned logging camp.

The Ministry of Natural Resources intends to install a treated and pressurized water distribution system at Barclay Bay in the near future

Barclay Bay campground operates from the third weekend in May until the second weekend after Labour Day. Full campground fees are charged during this period. Interior camping permits are required for persons using the interior campsites; at present, the only control point for interior use is the Barclay Bay campground, and the permit requirement is not enforced for Missinabi River travellers entering the park by Crooked Lake

There is a modest interpretive program at Barclay Bay. Activities include evening programs, guided hikes, and recreational skills demonstrations

The Barclay Bay campground is unusual within the provincial parks system. It is one of the smallest, most remote (access from Chapleau and the nearest provincial highway is by an 88 kilometre gravel road), and least developed provincial park campgrounds in Ontario. These qualities have contributed to its attraction, as there are few places in the province which combine the comforts of a managed campground

with a setting which closely approaches wilderness

Park staff based at Barclay Bay also manage the canoe routes within the park above Missinabi Lake. These include the Crooked Lake-Missinabi Lake portage, campsites on Little Missinabi Lake, and the six portages on the Little Missinabi River canoe route linking Little Missinabi and Missinabi lakes via Trout Lake

There are no other managed recreation facilities in Missinabi Park at present. The portages and campsites which provide day-use and long distance travel opportunities for canoeists and boaters from the outlet of Missinabi Lake to Moose River Crossing are not formally designated or maintained. Along this stretch of the river, there are about 40 portages, with the number actually required varying with water levels, flows and canoeist skills. There are at least 40 servicable campsites along the river at present, and a 1976 survey estimated a potential for about 170 campsites in total. There are no fees payable for use of the park below the outlet of Missinabi Lake

In recent years, the Ministry of Natural Resources has begun to develop volunteer programs in which volunteers carry out back country surveillance and maintenance and the Ministry provides material support. Since 1983 a number of volunteer agreements have been signed to carry out necessary inventory and maintenance on various portions of the river

The main points of entry into and exit from the Missinabi system are as follows (see Map 2):

- * the community of Missanabie, accessible by highways 101 and 651, or Via Rail train from Sudbury, Chapleau, or White River; Missanabie is on Dog Lake, from which a short portage leads east across the height of land to Crooked Lake, the east end of which is the uppermost part of the Missinabi in Missinabi Park,
- * Barclay Bay campground on Missinabi Lake, accessible by forest access road from Chapleau,
- * Peterbell, accessible by Via Rail train from Capreol, Foleyet, or Hornsby,
- * Maltice, accessible by Highway 11,
- * Moose River Crossing, accessible by Ontario Northland train from Cochrane and Moosonee,
- * Moosonee, accessible by Ontario Northland train from Cochrane, or scheduled air service, an easy paddle, with one portage required, leads from Moose River Crossing down the Moose to Moosonee

There are other points where some form of access to the Missinabi is possible from nearby forest access roads. These roads are concentrated between Brunswick Lake and the Alice Island area

At Maltice, the Township of Maltice-Val Côté has developed with provincial assistance a small park for canoe and boat access to the Missinabi. Picnic tables and pit toilets are provided, and there is potential for campsite development in the future. These facilities are on municipally owned shorelands outside the park

The use of motorboats is currently permitted throughout the park. Motorboat navigation is in practice restricted to Missinabi, Little Missinabi, and Brunswick lakes, the Missinabi for short distances above



Living canoe through rapids

and below Maltice, and the Moose and the portion of the Missinabi just upstream from the Moose

Snowmobiles have been technically prohibited, but traditionally permitted, within the former Missinabi Lake Park boundary. With the expansion of the park boundaries, snowmobiles are now technically prohibited in the entire park unless authorized by the superintendent. However, this prohibition is not being enforced until consideration can be given to allowing snowmobiles in some areas

Public Recreational Use

Drive-in use of the provincial park facilities at Barclay Bay is basically camping use, as day-use is almost nonexistent. In 1985, 8,286 camper nights were spent at Barclay Bay, since 1980, this figure has varied between 7,500 and 11,000 camper nights per season. In recent years, each campsite has been occupied for over 60 nights per season on average, which is very high for a northern park well off the beaten track. Campers stay for about four days on average, which is much longer than the provincial parks system average but is not surprising considering Missinabi Lake's remoteness. Peak use of the campground is from late June to mid August

In 1980, the last year for which comprehensive information is available, 39% of Barclay Bay campers were from Ontario, 8% were from other provinces, and 53% were from the United States. It appears that this pattern has not changed much in recent years. This has been a fairly consistent pattern since the campground opened. Most of the American visitors are from Michigan

A 1985 survey of a small sample of visitors found the following

- * fishing was part or all of the main reason why about two thirds of the visitors came, and the park's unspoiled natural character and its wildlife were part or all of the reason for about one third,
- * about two thirds of the visitors were repeat visitors,
- * those things that the visitors most liked about the park were, in order the fishing, Missinabi Lake itself, and the camping,
- * those things that visitors least liked about the park were, in order, the distance to the water pump, and nuisance bears,
- * additional facilities and services desired were, in order, more water outlets, a store, and showers and flush toilets,
- * most visitors like the park much as it is and would not want to see any major changes

As in practice no permits are required for use of the Missinabi canoe route (except for persons departing from Barclay Bay), there is no firm information on how many people use the river each year



as part of the management plan

Within the park, chartered or private aircraft landings are permitted on Little Missinabi Lake and Brunswick Lake with the permission of the Ministry Landings at other sites along the river corridor, while possible, can be hazardous due to fluctuations in water levels, and as a result will not be permitted. There is a private airstrip at Brunswick Lake Lodge (see Commercial Recreation and Tourism section below) for the use of lodge guests

Based on observations about the number of parties starting and completing their travels at various points, it is likely that at least 2,000 persons travel the river each year, for a total of at least 20,000 canoe trip user days. At Barclay Bay, interior camping permits totalling 584 camper nights were sold in 1985, and it is estimated that another 1,243 unpaid camper nights were spent on Missinabi Lake by persons starting their trips down the river at Missanabie and entering the park through Crooked Lake. The Ministry of Natural Resources has estimated that the Missinabi below Missinabi Lake has the potential to accommodate about 24,000 canoe trip user days without overcrowding and excessive pressure on the river environment. This suggests that use of the river may be near optimum capacity

The most common trips taken on the river are from Peterbell to Maltice or Moosonee, and from Maltice to Moosonee. The Peterbell-Maltice and Maltice-Moosonee sections are each taken about 10 days on average. The Maltice-Moosonee section is the most heavily used, likely because it takes travellers through the Thunder House Falls area and into the Hudson Bay Lowland, and is also the easiest and cheapest section for which to arrange transportation at the beginning and end of the journey. Along with the traditional canoe trippers, a small but increasing number are travelling the river by kayak. While there is no firm information on the origins of river travellers, it appears that most are residents of either southern Ontario or the United States

Day and Crown land camp camping use of the river is concentrated in the area accessible by forest access road from Highway 11, in other words, from Brunswick Lake to the Alice Island area. Most of these users travel by motorboat, and fishing is the main attraction and activity. The location of access roads and their nearness to the water do determine where day and camping use takes place. Canoeists also sometimes make use of these roads to make shorter trips down the river.

In winter, day-use snowmobiling is very popular in the Highway 11 area, but in or near the park is generally limited to access roads and lake surfaces from Brunswick Lake to Alice Island

Moose, Missinabi Lake



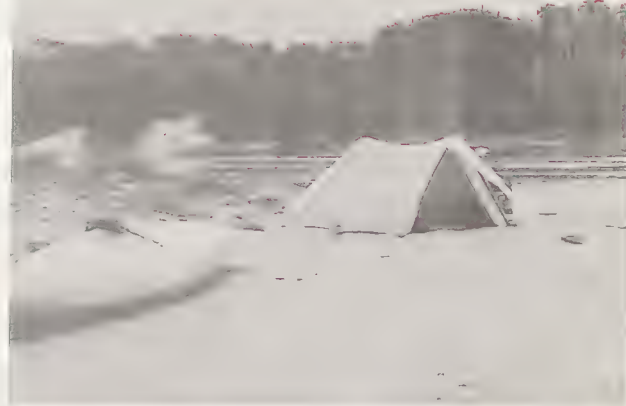
Commercial Recreation and Tourism

Four tourist operators have facilities within the exterior boundaries of the park (see Map 2). On Little Missinabi Lake, there are two fly-in outpost camps on park lands: one cabin accommodating six persons operated by Chico Outfitters, and one cabin accommodating 10 persons operated by Ontario Wilderness Vacations. On Brunswick Lake, there are two main base lodges on private lands: Kap'l Lodge, an American plan lodge accommodating 12 persons, and Brunswick Lake Lodge, a six cabin housekeeping operation accommodating 36 persons. High quality angling in a roadless setting is the main attraction and the main activity at all four camps.

There are no commercial facilities near Barclay Bay. Car campers must be fully outfitted once they leave Chapleau, which is the supply centre for Missinabi Lake visitors. Until now, there has been very little commercial activity aimed specifically at the canoe travel opportunities which the Missinabi provides. There are no outfitters oriented to the Missinabi. However, there are several organizations in Ontario which organize annual canoe trip programs, including package trip and recreational equipment retailers catering to back country travellers, and naturalist groups which operate programs for their own members on a cost recovery basis. The Missinabi is growing in popularity as a destination for these groups. Canoeists certainly provide an additional revenue source for retailers in communities along the way, particularly Mattice and Moosonee, and for Via Rail and Ontario Northland which are commonly used for transportation in and out. It is difficult to assess the nature and extent of these impacts.

Market Trends

The recreation and tourism market trends which Missinabi Park faces are typical of those affecting northern Ontario as a whole. Use of the traditional tourism base of commercial lodges, campgrounds, and outposts, provincial park campgrounds, and Crown land camping areas is not growing. Day-use recreation is also not growing, which is to be expected



Camping in the Lowland

considering the region's static or declining population and economic problems. However, certain specialized markets are growing, and it is widely believed that the future hopes of the tourist industry lie in cultivating those markets.

Use of the Barclay Bay campground has remained fairly stable. This campground provides a quality recreational experience to loyal and dedicated visitors. However, right now the campground's growth potential is uncertain. If in future the Missinabi becomes better known because of the incorporation of almost the entire system in a major provincial park and the designation of the waterway as a Canadian Heritage River, then use of Barclay Bay campground could be expected to increase.

The rapid growth in canoe tripping on the Missinabi occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. There is not enough evidence to suggest any change in overall use levels in the last few years. It does seem, however, that adult organized group use of the river has increased. This type of use is an example of a specialty market which is rapidly

growing all across Canada.

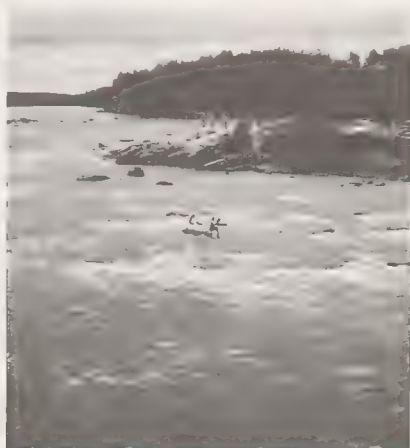
As noted earlier, river use levels may not be far off ideal capacity. Use of the river is not currently regulated by the Ministry of Natural Resources in any way (except for sale of interior camping permits at Barclay Bay), but there is a self-regulating tendency to canoe use, especially in more remote areas such as the Missinabi. Long distance canoeists enjoy their favorite areas for their remoteness, isolation, and unspoiled character. If overcrowding, development, or increased resource extraction detract from those qualities, then canoeists will go elsewhere. Strict regulation can also result in declines in use, not only because the regulations themselves may restrict numbers, but also because regulations are not entirely consistent with the free and unregulated environment which many canoeists seek. In Ontario, interior use fell in Algonquin and Quetico provincial parks after strict regulations were imposed, although environmental quality was certainly improved and guaranteed for those remaining. Regardless of any regulations which may be imposed

in future, if the Missinabi becomes significantly better known provincially and nationally, increases in overall user pressure can be expected.

While day-use and Crown land car camping recreation are not growing overall in the Highway 11 corridor, changing access conditions bring changes in the locations of these activities. Fishing is usually best in areas which have not previously been open to road access, and local anglers understandably seek those areas out. Although not all forest access roads are legally open to the public, enforcement of posted and gated closings is difficult, and the only effective way to close a road is to permanently block it, which can only be done once a road is no longer needed for timber harvesting and forest management. As a result, use of areas where access has recently improved is growing, and Brunswick Lake is the prime example of this trend in the park. The extension of forest roads northwards around the Thunder House Falls area and to the Pwabiskau River may have a similar effect in those areas.



Missinabi Lake



Running Rock Island Rapids

Missinaibi Provincial Park: Planning Background

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

- 1970: Missinaibi Lake Provincial Park is established, including central and eastern Missinaibi Lake and surrounding lands and totalling 44,000 hectares in area. The first Missinaibi River Provincial Park Reserve is established, withdrawing from disposition Crown lands within 122 metres of the Missinaibi River from Missinaibi Lake Park to the Thunder House Falls area.
- 1976: A major Missinaibi River planning program is undertaken, including detailed studies of the river's natural, historical, and recreational resources. Missinaibi River Park Reserve is extended, withdrawing from disposition Crown lands within 122 metres of Brunswick Lake and River, the Missinaibi and Moose rivers from the Thunder House Falls area to Moose River Crossing, and portages to Brunswick Lake and in the Thunder House Falls area. Within the park reserve, mineral exploration is permitted under restrictive conditions from the outlet of the Coal River to Moose River Crossing.
- 1977: The Ministry releases information: *Missinaibi River*, announcing its intention to consider land use options for the Missinaibi and inviting public comment.
- 1978: The Ministry releases *The Missinaibi River Park Reserve Study: A Boundary and Management Proposal*, recommending long term park reserve status for the river along with improved boundaries and a proposed management approach. Public comment is invited.

- 1979: The boundaries of Missinaibi River Park Reserve are redrawn, withdrawing from disposition Crown lands within approximately the present boundary of the park below Missinaibi Lake, while permitting mineral exploration under restrictive conditions from Long Rapids to Moose River Crossing. *Missinaibi River Park Reserve: Interim Management Plan* is released.
- 1982: The Missinaibi River Park Reserve, and extensions of Missinaibi Lake Park to include western Missinaibi Lake and Little Missinaibi Lake, are formally identified as potential provincial parks to be considered in land use planning for the Ministry's administrative districts. These proposals, along with many others, are discussed with the public as part of the Ministry's planning program.
- 1983: Land use guidelines for the Ministry's administrative districts are published. The Chapleau District guidelines recommend that the boundaries of Missinaibi Lake Park be adjusted to approximately those of the present park above the outlet of Missinaibi Lake. The Chapleau, Kapuskasing, and Hearst District guidelines (the Moose River District guidelines have not yet been prepared) recommend that the Missinaibi River Park Reserve be designated as a provincial park.
- 1985: The Ministry nominates the Missinaibi waterway for designation as a Canadian Heritage River. The Ministry and Parks Canada agree to jointly prepare the Missinaibi Provincial Park Management Plan.
- 1986: New boundaries for a single Missinaibi Provincial Park are established, to include the old Missinaibi Lake Park with the

boundary changes proposed in the district guidelines, plus the Missinaibi River Park Reserve (see Map 2).

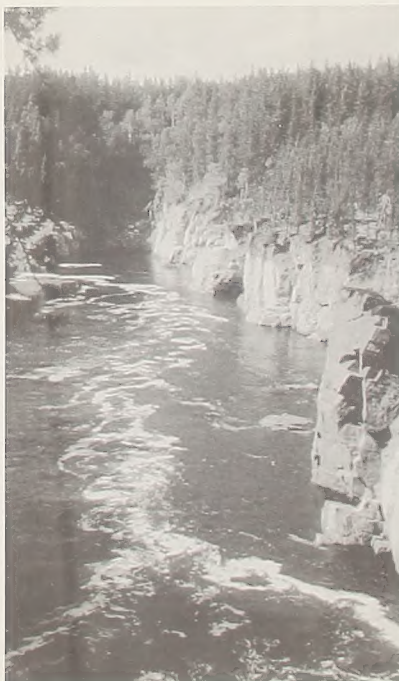
Canada, Department of the Environment - Parks

- 1973: Parks Canada surveys the Missinaibi and Moose rivers as part of an assessment of the resources and significance of Canada's wild rivers.
- 1984: The Government of Canada, represented by Parks Canada, five provincial governments, and the two territorial governments announce the establishment of the Canadian Heritage Rivers program.
- 1985: The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board receives Ontario's nomination of the Missinaibi waterway as a Canadian Heritage River, and recommends designation of the river on submission of a management plan. Parks Canada and the Ministry of Natural Resources agree to jointly prepare the Missinaibi Provincial Park Management Plan.

End of Portage, Allen Island



Climbing Aboard



Conjuring House Rock

Hydroelectric Power Development Prospects

Ontario Hydro has identified three sites in Missinaibi Park as having significant hydroelectric power potential: Thunder House Falls, Long Rapids, and Grey Goose Island above Moose River Crossing. Another potential site is at Renison on the Moose below Moose River Crossing; flooding at this site would extend up into the park. Hydro holds water power reserves at all these sites except Grey Goose Island, and also holds a reserve at Portage Island where the Missinaibi meets the Moose. Since the reserves were originally laid down, Hydro has concluded that Grey Goose Island is a better site than Portage Island, and has requested (but has not been granted) a reserve at Grey Goose. Hydro has also indicated that it might consider surrendering its reserves at Thunder House Falls and Long Rapids as well as Portage Island in return for confirmation of the Grey Goose Island reserve. Hydro's development interest in these sites is long term (after 1990 for the Moose and after 2000 for the Missinaibi), and no specific development proposals have been prepared.

Development of dams and reservoirs would have significant negative effects on the park's natural, historical, scenic, and recreational values. Dams in the almost level Lowland and Clay Belt would not only flood nearby features, but also create wide reservoirs extending long distances upstream, changing the character of long stretches of the river. Hydroelectric power development would not be compatible with waterway park designation in the stretches affected.

Other Land Use Plans

The only area within Missinaibi Park to which any other land use plans or controls apply is the Township of Mattice-Val Côté, which forms part of the Hearst Planning Area. The Mattice Secondary Plan forms part of the Hearst Official Plan and governs land use in the Township. In the secondary plan, all the shorelines of the river up to the 220 metres contour, including both park and non-park lands, are designated as hazard lands, which is compatible with park designation. There are some park lands in the Township which may lie above the 220 metres contour; these are designated as natural resource lands, which is also compatible with park designation. The Township also has a zoning bylaw.

Park Boundaries

- The 1979 boundaries of the Missinaibi River Park Reserve, which are basically the present park boundaries below Missinaibi Lake, were drawn to protect the visual corridor along the river, with one exception. From the outlet of the Coal River to just above Moose River Crossing, the boundary extends 122 metres back from the shoreline. The 1979 interim management plan indicated that a 300 metre deep reserve would be desirable to protect the visual corridor in this area. The interim plan indicated that after the Ontario Government's assessment of the mineral resource potential of the Cretaeous Basin was completed, the boundary would be extended if the mineral potential of the affected area were found to be low. The results of the Cretaeous Basin survey have not yet been published and this issue is still not resolved.
- The boundaries of the park include most of Moose River Crossing. As a result, most of this community's residences and some of its public buildings are on park lands without legal tenure and are legally subject to provincial parks legislation. The Provincial Parks Act is not designed to accommodate permanent communities, and it has never been the intent of the Ontario Government to regulate native occupation of Crown land in Ontario's far north through the Provincial Parks Act.

Forest Resources

- Although there will be no timber harvesting within park boundaries, harvesting activity will still be audible from certain

stretchers of the waterway, and winter and permanent road crossings will be visible.

- The 1974 agreement of Spruce Falls Power and Paper not to cut within 122 metres of the shoreline in its privately owned townships was a welcome and valuable contribution to the establishment and maintenance of Missinaibi River Park Reserve. Now that the reserve has been elevated to waterway park status, more comprehensive guarantees for the protection of these shorelines may be desirable.

Mineral Resources

- There are no agreements in place with the holders of surface and mineral rights along the Missinaibi in McBrien and Habel townships to ensure protection of the shorelines should mineral exploration or development become active on these properties.
- Any mineral exploration activities conducted under exploratory licences of occupation in the Thunder House Falls area could impair heritage and recreational values.

Fisheries

- Increasing access to Brunswick Lake may be impairing one of the park's high quality fisheries. Except for the 1986 creel census, there is no information on the current state of, and prospects for, the lake's fishery.

Cultural Resources

- Some of the park's fur trade archaeological sites are well known and have suffered from vandalism and private collecting of artifacts. The most affected sites are the two New Brunswick

Houses, on Missinaibi and Brunswick lakes.

Hydroelectric Power Development

- The possibility of future Ontario Hydro proposals for hydroelectric power development along the Missinaibi and Moose raises major questions about the future of the Missinaibi as a waterway park and a Canadian Heritage River. Hydro's original reserves remain in place; requests for alterations and suggestions of exchanges remain unresolved.

Recreation and Tourism

- There is considerable uncontrolled public road access to the Missinaibi between Brunswick Lake and the Alice Island area. Issues associated with this access include:
 - changes to the previously roadless character of Brunswick Lake, including the possible impacts on fisheries already mentioned, which would be to the detriment of existing tourist operations;
 - litter and site deterioration in unmanaged areas heavily used by day users and Crown land campers;
 - the possible extension of road access impacts north to the Thunder House Falls area and the Pwabiskau River as a result of the proposed forest management agreement with Hearst Forest Management Inc.;
 - any proposals for access control must take into account the beliefs of many local residents that use of forest access roads to enjoy Crown land and Crown recreational resources is a basic right and an essential feature of

the northern quality of life.

- There is also potential for road access to have adverse impacts on Little Missinaibi Lake, where the park boundary comes quite close to much of the shoreline and timber harvesting is active just beyond.
- It appears that the waterway below Missinaibi Lake may be nearing its natural capacity to provide quality back country recreation, although there is no firm evidence to support this. If the river is in fact nearing capacity, proper management of recreational pressures will require some regulation of interior use. Any such regulations should not make the Missinaibi experience unacceptable to many of those who currently enjoy it, and should be capable of being enforced economically and efficiently.
- Portages and campsites along the waterway below Missinaibi Lake are not regularly maintained, and as a result many are not in good condition. Facilities in poor condition are least able to sustain the impacts of heavy use; it appears that the Thunder House Falls area is showing signs of this problem. The poor condition of many existing facilities, and the lack of development of many potential campsites, also constrain the capacity of the river to accommodate users. Poorly marked portages have the potential to expose uncautious canoeists to dangerous situations and the Ministry of Natural Resources to greater liability risks.
- The current status of snowmobiling in the park is unclear and needs to be resolved. While this does not present a major problem at present, there

may be some areas where use of snowmobiles should be restricted.

- There is currently considerable recreational activity within the park, and the prospect of more in the future. There may be a need for more commercial services to meet visitor needs, and there is certainly the potential for a greater share of visitor expenditures to be channelled into local communities.



Winter Ice Crossing, Spruce Falls



Algocen Camp

For Further Information

A wide variety of documents prepared over the last 15 years provide background for this management plan and are listed below. These include detailed studies of the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the Missinaibi waterway, planning documents for Missinaibi River Provincial Park Reserve, and Ministry of Natural Resources planning documents for the area surrounding the park.

All documents were published by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources unless indicated otherwise.

Resource Background Studies

- A Preliminary Cultural History of Missinaibi Lake Provincial Park*, 1974.
- The Fur Trade in the Moose-Missinaibi River Valley 1770-1917*, by Doug Baldwin, Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1975.
- Earth Science Inventory: Missinaibi River Park Reserve*, 1976.
- Missinaibi River Recreation Potential*, 1976.
- Life Science Survey, Missinaibi River Park Reserve*, 1977.
- An Assessment of Earth Science Processes and Features for Land Use Planning of Missinaibi Lake Provincial Park and Park Reserve*, McKenzie McCulloch Associates for Ministry of Natural Resources, 1982.
- Missinaibi Park Life Sciences*, Daniel F. Brunton for Ministry of Natural Resources, 1982.

- Spirits of the Pictured Waters: The Archaeology of the Missinaibi River Valley*, Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, 1983.
- The 20th Century Human History of Missinaibi Provincial Park*, 1985.

Missinaibi Waterway Planning Documents

- Information: Missinaibi River*, 1977.
- Missinaibi River Park Reserve: A Study*, 1977.
- Missinaibi River Park Reserve: Project Team Report*, 1977.
- The Missinaibi River Park Reserve Study: Boundary and Management Proposal*, 1978.
- A Summary of Public Input into the Planning and Management of the Missinaibi River Park Reserve*, 1978.
- Missinaibi River Park Reserve Interim Management Plan*, 1979.
- Canadian Heritage Rivers System Nomination Document: Missinaibi Waterway*, 1985.

Other Ministry of Natural Resources Planning Documents

- Chapleau District Land Use Plan: Background Information*, 1981.
- Hearst District Land Use Plan: Background Information*, 1981.
- Kapuskasing District Land Use Plan: Background Information*, 1981.
- Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines*, 1983.
- Hearst District Land Use Guidelines*, 1983.
- Kapuskasing District Land Use Guidelines*, 1983.
- Chapleau Crown Game Preserve Wildlife Management Plan: Background Information*, 1984.

Background Information, 1984.

- Chapleau Crown Game Preserve Wildlife Management Plan 1985-2000*, 1985.

All of these reports and documents are public information. Although the Ministry cannot provide individuals with copies, you are welcome to visit the following locations during normal business hours where copies are available for reference purposes.

Ministry of Natural Resources
Chapleau District Office, 190-192 Cherry Street, Chapleau, Ontario, (705)864-1710.

Ministry of Natural Resources
Hearst District Office, 631 Front Street, Hearst, Ontario, (705)362-4346.

Ministry of Natural Resources
Kapuskasing District Office, 6-8-10 Government Rd., Kapuskasing, Ontario, (705)335-6191.

Ministry of Natural Resources
Moosonee District Office, Ontario Government Building, Revillon Road, Moosonee, Ontario, (705)336-2397.

Ministry of Natural Resources
Northern Regional Office, 140 Fourth Ave., Cochrane, Ontario, (705)272-7037.

Ministry of Natural Resources Park Planning Section, Parks and Recreational Areas Branch, 3rd Floor, Whitney Block, 99 Wellesley St. West, Toronto, Ontario, (416)965-2745.

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